

PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Assessment/Accountability



1. What are the Sunshine State Standards?	The Sunshine State Standards are standards that identify what public school students should know and be able to do. The standards form the basis of public K-12 educational instruction and are high levels of expectations for student achievement in Florida public schools for grades Pre-K to 2, 3-5, 6-8 and 9-12. The standards are the foundation of student performance. The tool for the evaluation and demonstration of the standards is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT). (Refer to the <u>Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.</u>)
2. How were the Sunshine State Standards developed?	The DOE began developing the Sunshine State Standards in 1994 with the help of teachers, school administrators, business leaders, nationally-known education experts, and representatives of professional organizations. Extensive research was conducted on content, competencies, and instructional practices culminating in the Sunshine State Standards in early 1996. The State Board of Education approved the standards in 1996 to give parents, students, teachers, and school administrators a clear understanding of what skills and competencies Florida students should have in subject areas at specified stages of their school career.
3. What subject areas are covered in the Sunshine State Standards?	The Sunshine State Standards were originally developed for seven subject areas. Since 1996, subjects have been further defined and include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages, reading, writing, history, government, geography, economics, and computer literacy. In the subject areas of language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies, the standards have been expanded to include grade level expectations.
4. Why are the Sunshine State Standards necessary?	The Sunshine State Standards establish the baseline of information that students are expected to know at specified stages of their academic progression for purposes of measuring student performance and progress. The Sunshine State Standards are the foundation for a system of high standards and levels of achievement. With established standards at four combined grade levels, students can be monitored academically as they develop.
5. How will students know that they are meeting the	State and local assessments may be used to determine student progression. The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test

standards?	(FCAT), which is a combination of criterion-referenced and norm-referenced components, is designed and used to measure how well students in grades 3-10 are learning the skills and competencies outlined in the Sunshine State Standards. Assessments for each grade level must be capable of measuring each student's mastery of the Sunshine State Standards for that grade level and above, and must measure the annual progress of mastery of the Sunshine State Standards. (Refer to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.)
6. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	Section 1000.21(7), F.S. - Definition. Section 1001.03(1), F.S. -- Student performance standards. Section 1003.41, F.S. -- Sunshine State Standards. Section 1008.22, F.S.-- Student assessment program. Rules 6A-1.09401, F.A.C. -- Minimum student performance standards
7. Where can I get additional information?	Florida Department of Education K-12 Office of the Chancellor (850) 245-0509 Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451



Education Council

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)

Fact Sheet

January 2005

<p>1. What is the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test?</p>	<p>The Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) is a series of norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests designed to measure the Sunshine State Standards skills and competencies. The FCAT is an integral part of Florida's overall plan to improve student achievement through higher standards. The Sunshine State Standards outline the skills and competencies Florida students should have in seven subject areas at certain stages of their school career. (Refer to the Sunshine State Standards Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>2. In what grades is the FCAT administered?</p>	<p>The FCAT is administered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Mathematics tests</i> -- administered in grades 3 through 10, these tests are multiple choice and short-answer/long-answer performance tasks and include information related to other Sunshine State Standards content areas such as the arts, social studies, science, foreign language, and physical education.• <i>Reading tests</i> -- administered in grades 3 through 10, these tests are multiple-choice and short-answer/long-answer performance tasks that use various books and publications that students should be able to read at their grade level.• <i>Writing tests</i> -- administered in grades 4, 8, and 10, these tests require students to prepare original essays on various topics that are scored on a rubric of 1 to 6.• <i>Science tests</i> - administered in grades 5, 8, and 10, these tests are multiple-choice and performance tasks that cover sciences in four categories: physical and chemical, earth and space, life and environment, and scientific thinking. According to a October 13, 2004 Department of Education Memorandum to District School Superintendents, beginning in the 2004-2005 school year, the grade 10 science FCAT will be administered in grade 11. <p>Students must earn a passing score on the reading, writing, and math components of the 10th grade FCAT or a concordant score on an alternative assessment in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma. (See High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.) However, certain disabled students may be exempted from this requirement (See</p>

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	<p>Question 10).</p> <p>If a student does not participate in the FCAT, the school district is required to notify the student's parent and provide the parent with information regarding the implication of such nonparticipation.</p>
<p>3. When is the FCAT administered?</p>	<p>Current law requires the Commissioner of Education to establish a schedule for the administration of the FCAT that provides the latest possible administration and the earliest possible results.</p> <p>The FCAT test dates for the 2004-2005 academic year were set for the following dates. However, school districts that closed for at least six days during the 2004 hurricane season may be authorized to delay testing of the FCAT from one to two weeks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>September 27-October 1 or October 4 -8, 2004:</i> FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests in the 11th and 12th grades. • <i>February 8-9, 2005:</i> FCAT writing test for students in the 4th, 8th, and 10th grades. • <i>February 28-March 11, 2005:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -- FCAT reading and math tests for all students in the 3rd thru 10th grades. -- FCAT science test for students in the 5th, 8th, and 10th grades. -- FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests in the 11th and 12th grades. • <i>June 20-24, 2005:</i> FCAT reading and math tests for new students and students retaking one or both tests and who are rising 12th grade students or above.
<p>4. How was the FCAT developed?</p>	<p>The Florida Department of Education's (DOE) Assessment and Evaluation Services Section developed the FCAT in conjunction with classroom teachers, curriculum experts, administrators, and citizens.</p>
<p>5. How is the FCAT scored?</p>	<p>Multiple-choice questions are machine scored. Trained evaluators hand score performance task short and long answer questions.</p>
<p>6. How are FCAT scores reported and what do the scores mean?</p>	<p>The FCAT scores are reported two ways. First, the score is reported on a cut-score scale of 100 to 500. Cut-scores are linked to one of five achievement levels as established by rule, with level one being the lowest level and level five being the highest level. These scores reflect student achievement at a particular grade level.</p>

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	<p>Second, a developmental score is reported on a scale of 0 to 3000. As students move from one grade level to the next, the developmental score should increase to reflect increased achievement. The developmental score is intended to allow parents and educators to monitor the year-to-year academic progress of students.</p>
7. How will a student's scores be used?	<p>As a part of the Student Assessment Program, the FCAT data is used to assist in identifying student progress towards mastery of the Sunshine State Standards, assessing the learning gains of students, and determining school performance grade categories. (Refer to the School Grading System Fact Sheet and the High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.)</p>
8. What are the passing scores on the 10 th grade FCAT that students must achieve in order to graduate with a standard high school diploma?	<p>In order to graduate with a standard high school diploma, graduates in the 2003-2004 school year had to achieve a cut-score of 300 in the reading portion and 300 in the mathematics portion of the FCAT or concordant standardized test scores on the ACT or SAT. Before a student is authorized to use a concordant score for purposes of high school graduation, the student must take the FCAT three times without earning the passing score.</p> <p>The 2004 Legislature passed an exception; dependent children of members of the Armed Forces who transfer to a Florida public school during the student's last year of high school are allowed to use a concordant score to satisfy the FCAT requirement for graduation.</p> <p>If students do not achieve the required cut score when they initially take the FCAT and DOE subsequently raises the cut-score, on future retakes, students must only earn the required cut-score that was required at the time when they initially took the FCAT. (Refer to the High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.)</p>
9. What options are available for students who are unable to pass the grade 10 FCAT?	<p>Students who have met all requirements for the standard high school diploma except for passage of the grade 10 FCAT or an alternate assessment by the end of grade 12 must be provided the following learning opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in an accelerated high school equivalency diploma preparation program during the summer. • upon receipt of a certificate of completion, be allowed to take the College Placement Test and be admitted to remedial or credit courses at a state community college, as appropriate.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in an adult general education program for such time as the student requires to master English, reading, mathematics, or any subject required for high school graduation. A student attending an adult general education program shall have the opportunity to take the grade 10 FCAT an unlimited number of times in order to receive a <u>standard high school diploma</u>.
10. What options are available for students with disabilities to take or to be exempt from the FCAT?	<p>The FCAT requirement may be waived for a student with a disability for the purpose of receiving a <i>standard high school diploma</i> under all of the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student does not receive a passing grade on the FCAT after an opportunities to do so with appropriate accommodations and modifications once in grade 10 and once in grade 11. (Refer to FCAT Accommodations Fact Sheet.) • Student has completed all other required course work for high school graduation. • Student's individual educational plan (IEP) committee has determined that the FCAT cannot accurately measure the student's abilities taking into consideration all allowable accommodations. (Refer to the Exceptional Student Education Fact Sheet.) <p>A student with a disability is not eligible for a <i>standard high school diploma</i> if the student's IEP committee excludes the student from the FCAT and identifies an alternate assessment procedure under the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student's demonstrated cognitive ability prevents the student from completing required course work and achieving Sunshine State Standards even with authorized course modifications; or • Student requires extensive direct instruction to accomplish the application and transfer of skills and competencies needed for domestic, community living, leisure, and <u>vocational activities</u>.
11. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 1001.02, F.S. -- General powers of the State Board of Education</p> <p>Section 1003.433(2), F.S. - Out-of-state and out-of-country transfer students</p> <p>Section 1008.22, F.S. -- Student assessment program for public schools</p> <p>Section 1008.33, F.S. -- Authority to enforce school improvement</p> <p>Section 1008.345, F.S. -- Implementation of state system of school improvement and <u>educational accountability</u></p>

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	<p>Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C. -- Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C. -- Implementation of Florida's System of School Improvement and Educational Accountability</p>
<p>12. Where can I get additional information?</p>	<p>Florida Department of Education (FDOE) K-12 Assessment and School Performance (850) 245-0513 www.fldoe.org</p> <p>12th Grade Options toll free line 1-800-315-0833 www.12thgradoptions.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Accommodations

Fact Sheet

January 2005

<p>1. Who is eligible to receive accommodations when taking the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)?</p>	<p>Students with disabilities, students in exceptional education programs, and students who have limited English proficiency are eligible to receive test accommodations and modifications of procedures as necessary when taking the FCAT.</p> <p>A "student with a disability" means any student who is documented as having mental retardation; a hearing impairment, including deafness; a speech or language impairment; a visual impairment, including blindness; a serious emotional brain injury; or a specific learning disability, including, but not limited to, dyslexia, dyscalculai, or developmental aphasia.</p>
<p>2. What is a test "accommodation"?</p>	<p>Current State Board of Education rule defines accommodations as adjustments to the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Presentation of the assessment questions;• Methods of recording the responses to the questions;• Schedule for the administration of the assessment;• Use of assistive devices to facilitate administration of the assessment. <p>The accommodations must demonstrate the student's abilities rather than reflect the student's impaired sensory, manual, speaking, or psychological process skills.</p>
<p>3. What types of accommodations can students with disabilities receive when taking the FCAT?</p>	<p>Pursuant to State Board of Education rule, current authorized accommodations available to students with disabilities may include one or more of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A regular print version of the test may be enlarged using mechanical or electronic means.• Large print versions of the test.• Braille versions of the test.• Signed or oral presentation may be provided for all directions and items <i>except reading items</i>.• Means to maintain or enhance visual attention to test items.• Written, signed, and verbal responses.• Use of mechanical and electronic devices to record responses.• Transcription of the student's responses by a test administrator.

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Accommodations

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test administration during several brief sessions with frequent breaks or additional time. • Test administration individually or in a small group setting. • Adaptive or special furniture and special lighting or acoustics. • The use of a calculator when <i>complex computations</i> are required. • The use of an abacus. • The use of visual magnification and auditory amplification devices. • The use of technology <i>without accessing spelling or grammar-checking applications</i> for writing assignments and <i>without accessing speech output programs</i> for reading items. <p>State Board of Education Rule specifies that accommodations may be provided <i>only</i> if they <i>do not alter the underlying content</i> that is being measured by the test or <i>negatively affect the test's reliability or validity</i>.</p>
4. What types of accommodations are not allowed during administration of the FCAT?	<p>According to the DOE, the following are examples of accommodations that may be used in classrooms for instructional purposes, but are not allowable accommodations on all or portions of the FCAT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of reading materials orally or on audiotape. • Provision of a "reading buddy" during the reading test. • Use of a calculator for grades 3-6. • Reduction in the total number of test questions. • Use of a thesaurus for writing assignments. • Provision of special word processing software that assists and anticipates what the student is trying to write. • Use of "memory cards".
5. How does a parent of a student with a disability know if an accommodation the student receives during instruction is permissible during the administration of the FCAT?	<p>Beginning January 7, 2003, a school district is required to inform the parents of a student with a disability of the implications associated with providing the student with accommodations during classroom instruction that are not allowable on the FCAT.</p> <p>The parent of a student with a disability must consent in writing for the student to receive accommodations during instruction that are not permitted on the FCAT and must acknowledge in writing that he or she understands the implications of such accommodations.</p>
6. What options are available for students	<p>Students with disabilities may request and the Commissioner of Education may approve additional unique accommodations not currently authorized. Students who are granted such</p>

Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT) Accommodations

with disabilities who need unique accommodations that are not currently authorized?	<p>unique accommodations are still eligible to receive a standard high school diploma.</p> <p>During the 2002-2003 academic year, only ten unique accommodation requests were made and all ten were granted by the commissioner.</p>
7. What type of high school diploma are students with disabilities issued if they receive accommodations when taking the FCAT?	<p>Pursuant to State Board of Education Rule, students with disabilities who receive an authorized accommodation on the FCAT are eligible for a standard high school diploma as long as he or she complies with all other criteria for graduation with a standard high school diploma. (Refer to the FCAT Fact Sheet and to the High School Graduation Requirements Fact Sheet.)</p>
8. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 1002.23(2)(f), F.S. -- Family and School Partnership for Student Achievement Act.</p> <p>Section 1003.43(8) and (11), F.S. -- High School Graduation Requirements.</p> <p>Section 1007.02, F.S. -- Enhanced New Needed Opportunity for Better Life and Education for Students with Disabilities (ENNOBLES) Act.</p> <p>Section 1008.22(3)(c), F.S. -- Student Assessment Program for Public Schools.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.0943, F.A.C. -- Statewide Assessment for Students with Disabilities.</p> <p>Florida Department of Education Memorandum <i>Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT)</i> <i>Accommodations for Deaf/Hard of Hearing Students</i></p>
9. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education K-12 Assessment and School Performance (850) 245-0513</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council School Grading System

Fact Sheet

January 2005

<p>1. What are the different school grade categories?</p>	<p>School performance grades are assigned to reflect the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "A" - schools making excellent progress. • "B" - schools making above average progress. • "C" - schools making satisfactory progress. • "D" - schools making less than satisfactory progress. • "F" - schools failing to make adequate progress.
<p>2. What factors are used for determining a school's performance grade?</p>	<p>A school's performance grade is based on a combination of the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student achievement scores which indicate the percent of students who score at or above FCAT achievement level 3 in reading, writing, and math. • Annual student <i>learning gains</i>, as measured by annual FCAT assessments in grades 3 through 10. • Improvement on the FCAT in reading by the school's lowest 25th percentile of students, unless such students are performing above satisfactory performance. <p>(Refer to the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test Fact Sheet.)</p>
<p>3. What is meant by a student's annual "learning gain?"</p>	<p>A student's annual "learning gain" refers to an increase in student learning over a one-year period. The annual learning gain of a particular student is determined by comparing the student's current year performance to that student's performance during the prior year. DOE currently uses 3 factors to indicate a gain in student learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved FCAT achievement level from one year to the next. • Maintained achievement levels within levels 3, 4, or 5 from one year to the next. • Maintained FCAT achievement levels 1 or 2 and demonstration of more than one year's growth on the FCAT developmental scale, as determined by the DOE. <p>Students whose FCAT Achievement Level declines from one year to the next shall not be deemed to have made annual learning gains.</p>
<p>4. Are all students' test scores counted toward a school's grade?</p>	<p>In accordance with s. 1008.34, F.S., all students must participate in the statewide assessment testing program, except as otherwise prescribed by the Commissioner. According to DOE, all students' test scores are included in a school's grade, including students who are: language impaired,</p>

	<p>speech impaired, gifted, hospital and homebound but have no other disabilities, and limited English proficient (LEP) students who have been in an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) program for more than two years.</p> <p>The only prescribed exceptions to the testing requirements have been for severely disabled students classified in Support Levels III through V of the Exceptional Student Education categories, LEP students who have been in ESOL programs for less than two years, and students in Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) commitment facilities. Beginning in 2004-2005, test results of all students, regardless of disability or limited English proficiency, will be included in the calculation of the percent of students being tested and the percent of students displaying learning gains. (Refer to the English for Speakers of Other Languages and the Exceptional Student Education Fact Sheets.)</p>
5. Are all schools graded?	<p>Generally, all public schools, including charter schools, receive a school grade. DOE has established a policy of not grading schools that do not have a statistically significant testing population. DJJ facilities and other schools that provide short-term alternative education programs are also not graded.</p>
6. Can a school receive a high grade by concentrating on its highest achieving students at the expense of others?	<p>No. According to s. 1008.34(3)(b), F.S., a school's grade must not only include the aggregate scores of all eligible students who have been assessed on the FCAT, but also the aggregate scores of all eligible students who have an FCAT reading score at or in the lowest 25th percentile of students in the school unless these students are performing above satisfactory performance. Thus, each district should also concentrate on improving the scores of its lowest performers.</p>
7. What are school improvement ratings?	<p>School improvement ratings are indicators of whether a school's performance has improved, remained the same, or declined from one year to the next. The ratings are based on a comparison of the current year's and previous year's student and school performance data.</p>
8. Are there rewards for schools that make certain grades?	<p>Yes. Schools which receive an "A," making excellent progress, are rewarded in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility for school recognition awards of up to \$100/student. • Receipt of deregulated status, if requested. • Greater authority over allocation of the school's budget <p>Schools that improve at least one grade are also eligible for school recognition awards. (Refer to the Deregulation of Public Schools and the School Recognition Program Fact</p>

	Sheets.)																																										
9. What assistance is available to schools with low performing grades?	<p>Schools that receive performance grades of "D" or "F" may receive priority for training, technical assistance, and other services designed to improve school performance. Specific services offered by the State Board of Education through the <i>Assistance Plus</i> program to districts with failing schools during 2004-2005 include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide full-time school improvement facilitators• Provide site-based mathematics and reading coaches• Assign regional technology support staff to assist with effective integration of technology into instruction• Partner with the College Board to provide teacher training and student mentors• Establish and implement Community Oversight Boards• Provide professional development• Schedule information sharing activities with principals and faculty of similar schools with higher performance• Establish in district budgets a special category to support school improvement efforts at "F" schools <p>Students assigned to attend schools that have received a performance grade "F," failing to make adequate progress, for 2 school years in a 4-year period are eligible to participate in the Opportunity Scholarship Program. (Refer to the Opportunity Scholarships Fact Sheet.)</p>																																										
10. How do parents find out about a school's grade?	<p>The DOE and the school districts are required to annually publish school grades and school improvement ratings. Parents and guardians are entitled by law to an easy-to-read report card which gives information on both the school grade and rating of the school in which their child is enrolled.</p>																																										
11. What are the school grades in the state?	<table><tr><td></td><td><u>"A"</u></td><td><u>"B"</u></td><td><u>"C"</u></td><td><u>"D"</u></td><td><u>"F"</u></td></tr><tr><td>1998-1999</td><td>202</td><td>313</td><td>1230</td><td>601</td><td>76</td></tr><tr><td>1999-2000</td><td>579</td><td>266</td><td>1165</td><td>397</td><td>4</td></tr><tr><td>2000-2001</td><td>592</td><td>412</td><td>1122</td><td>307</td><td>0</td></tr><tr><td>2001-2002</td><td>894</td><td>553</td><td>725</td><td>185</td><td>64</td></tr><tr><td>2002-2003</td><td>1230</td><td>569</td><td>527</td><td>141</td><td>35</td></tr><tr><td>2003-2004</td><td>1262</td><td>540</td><td>615</td><td>184</td><td>49</td></tr></table>		<u>"A"</u>	<u>"B"</u>	<u>"C"</u>	<u>"D"</u>	<u>"F"</u>	1998-1999	202	313	1230	601	76	1999-2000	579	266	1165	397	4	2000-2001	592	412	1122	307	0	2001-2002	894	553	725	185	64	2002-2003	1230	569	527	141	35	2003-2004	1262	540	615	184	49
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12. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 1008.33, F.S. -- Authority to Enforce Public School Improvement.</p> <p>Section 1008.34(2), F.S. -- School Performance Grade Categories.</p> <p>Section 1008.34(4), F.S. -- School Improvement Ratings.</p> <p>Section 1008.34(5), F.S. -- School Grade and Improvement Rating Reports.</p> <p>Section 1008.345, F.S. -- School Improvement and Education</p>																																										

	<p>Accountability. Section 1008.36, F.S. -- Florida School Recognition Program. Section 1011.62(1)(f), F.S. -- Supplemental Academic Instruction.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09422, F.A.C. -- FCAT Requirements Rule 6A-1.09981, F.A.C. -- Implementation of Florida's System of School Improvement and Accountability.</p>
13. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education K-12 Assessment & School Performance (850)245-0513 www.fldoe.org</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



Education Council

School Recognition Program

Fact Sheet

January 2005

1. What is the School Recognition Program?	The School Recognition Program was created in 1997 to provide increased autonomy and financial awards to schools that have either sustained high student performance or demonstrated substantial improvement in student performance.
2. Which schools are eligible for recognition under this program?	Schools that either receive a performance grade "A" or improve at least one performance grade from the previous year are eligible for recognition and financial awards. Schools that either receive an "A" or improve at least two performance grades are eligible for increased autonomy. (Refer to the School Grading System Fact Sheet.)
3. What is meant by "increased autonomy"?	Schools that meet the criteria for increased autonomy may be given deregulated status as outlined in s. 1003.63 (5), (7), (8), (9), and (10), F.S. Essentially, such schools are exempt from all statutes of the Florida K-20 Education Code, except those pertaining to civil rights and student health, safety, and welfare. In addition, they have greater authority over the school's total budget, including, but not limited to, allocation of instructional staff and the acquisition of instructional materials, equipment, and technology.
4. Are schools that do not receive a performance grade eligible for school recognition?	No. Section 1008.36, F.S., specifies that the School Recognition Program uses school grades to determine eligibility. In addition, the rules of the Department of Education (DOE) also require schools to have a performance grade to participate in the program.
5. How many schools are eligible for school recognition this year?	The Department of Education reports that the 2004 school recognition list includes 1,425 schools eligible for \$117,190,880 in financial awards. (Refer to the School Grading System Fact Sheet.)
6. Do schools have to apply to receive the award?	No. A school's eligibility for an award is based solely on the specified performance criteria (See Question 2) . Award schools will be asked to provide information on successful programs and practices to share with other schools.
7. What is the amount of the financial award for each school?	Award amounts are equivalent to \$100 per student based on the school's prior year enrollment.

8. How may the funds from this program be used?	<p>The funds may be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • nonrecurring bonuses to the faculty and staff, • nonrecurring expenditures for educational equipment or materials, or for • temporary personnel to assist the school in maintaining or improving student performance.
9. Who decides how the award will be used?	<p>The school's staff and the school advisory council (SAC) jointly decide the use of the funds within the above stated purposes. Local schools may develop their own processes for reaching a decision; however the planned use of funds is subject to the approval of the school staff and the SAC. The decision at the school level must not conflict with any state policies on expenditures of these funds. If no decision is made by November 1, the award money is evenly distributed to the classroom teachers who currently teach at the award school.</p>
10. May schools share their award with other school(s)?	<p>Yes. Schools may decide to share their awards with feeder schools (i.e., schools of a lower grade which "feed" students to the award school), low performing schools, and new schools receiving faculty and students from the award school. The school staff and the SAC must approve the decision. Shared funds must still be expended for the purposes outlined in law.</p>
11. May faculty and staff who were at the school during the year the award was earned, but who are no longer there, receive a bonus?	<p>Yes, but only if the staff and SAC currently at the awarded school decide, prior to November 1, to do so.</p>
12. Are these funds subject to collective bargaining?	<p>No. According to s. 1008.36(5)(c) F.S., "[n]otwithstanding statutory provision to the contrary, incentive awards are not subject to collective bargaining."</p>
13. Must all the funds be spent in the same fiscal year?	<p>There is no time limit for the expenditure of funds. To maximize their benefits, it is good practice to spend performance awards in the same year they are received.</p>
14. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 1008.36, F.S. -- Florida School Recognition Program.</p> <p>Rule 6A-1.09981(10), F.A.C. -- Rewards and recognition</p>
15. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education Evaluation and Reporting (850) 245-0699</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives</p>

	Education Council (850) 488-7451
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Education Council

School Advisory Councils (SACs)

Fact Sheet

January 2005

1. What are School Advisory Councils?	School advisory councils are a key component of Florida's system of school improvement and accountability. Each district school board is required to establish a School Advisory Council (SAC) for each school in the district or a district advisory council if the district has fewer than 10,000 students. A SAC assists in preparing and evaluating the School Improvement Plan (SIP) and provides assistance in the preparation of the school's annual budget. SIPs are locally developed "blueprints" for achieving the state education goals and student performance standards.
2. Who is eligible to be a member of a SAC?	The SAC is composed of the school principal and an appropriately balanced number of teachers, education support employees, students, parents, and other business and community members who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school. A majority of the members must be persons who are not employed by the school. Council members must be elected by their respective peer groups at the school; the district school board establishes procedures to select business and community members and must review the membership composition of each SAC. If needed, the district school board must appoint additional members to achieve proper representation. Technical centers and high school advisory councils <i>must</i> include students; middle and junior high school advisory councils <i>may</i> include students. SACs of technical and adult education centers are not required to include parents as members. Funds from the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund (lottery dollars) may not be released to a district that does not comply with SAC membership composition requirements.
3. How has the membership requirement for SACs evolved?	<p>Before 1991, district school boards were not required to establish SACs. Any SACs which were established were required to have membership which was "broadly representative of the community served by the school." The 1991 Legislature replaced the "broadly representative..." language with the present language of, "(members) who are representative of the ethnic, racial, and economic community served by the school..."</p> <p>Since 1991, that language has been altered eight times. Most</p>

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	<p>of these changes have dealt with increasing the responsibility of SACs, but several of these changes have dealt with specific issues concerning the membership composition of the SAC. The 1997 Legislature required SACs to draw a majority of its membership from individuals who are not school board employees.</p> <p>To further strengthen community participation and input, the 2002 Legislature required school advisory councils to have bylaws. The bylaws must include the following provisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three day's written notice to all SAC members when a matter comes before the council that requires a vote. • A quorum must be present to vote on any matter. (A quorum is defined as a majority of the membership of the council.) • Meetings must be scheduled at times when all members can attend. • Members with two unexcused consecutive absences from a properly noticed meeting may be replaced. • Minutes of the meeting must be recorded. <p>Further, district school boards may review each set of bylaws, but they are not required to approve them. The district school board must also maintain a record of the minutes of council meetings for <u>each of their schools</u>.</p>
<p>4. Have reviews been conducted regarding the membership requirements of SACs?</p>	<p>Yes. A 1993-1994 performance review by the Office of the Auditor General, and a 1995-1996 report by the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) found persistent problems in SAC membership in the 14 school districts reviewed. In one-third of the SACs reviewed, 50% of the SAC membership was new to the council. Nearly half of the SACs reviewed did not include all statutorily required membership groups, such as business/community members and education support employees. Nearly one third did not reflect the school community's racial and ethnic diversity. School employees dominated 63% of the SACs, and school board employees dominated 78% of the SACs.</p> <p>Additionally, the OPPAGA reviews SAC membership composition through the Best Financial Management Practice Reviews. Of the four Best Practice Reviews performed by OPPAGA, two districts had problems with SAC membership composition in specific schools; one district had four SACs out of 38 that did not meet the required membership composition:</p>

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	<p>and the second district had seven SACs out of 108 that did not meet the required membership composition.</p> <p>The Auditor General also reviews SAC membership composition in their annual audits of school districts. The Auditor General's recent reports are as follows: in FY 1997-98, twelve districts out of 65 audited did not meet the SAC membership requirements; in FY 1998-99, six districts out of 51 audited did not meet the SAC membership requirement; and in FY 1999-2000, three districts out of 51 audited did not meet the SAC membership requirements.</p>
5. Is it difficult for a district to meet the membership composition requirements?	<p>According to the Department of Education, districts and schools frequently report that securing parental involvement at the schools and on the SACs is challenging. They report that this difficulty arises in finding participants who represent the lower economic groups served by the school, and who have the desire and time to serve on the SAC. This problem is magnified in schools with a high number of low income students, in that once the principal and several teachers fill positions on the council, the rest of the council must be representative of the lower economic community. This requirement may prevent certain concerned individuals who wish to serve from being allowed on a SAC. Additionally, it can be intrusive and impractical for schools to determine which ethnic, racial, or economic group an individual represents.</p>
6. Does a SAC have money to spend and how can they spend it?	<p>A portion of the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund is distributed to each school (through the districts) for the SAC to use for programs and projects to enhance school performance through the implementation of the School Improvement Plan (SIP). Neither school district staff nor a principal may override the recommendations of the school advisory council for the use of the money. The money may not be used for capital improvements or for projects or programs with duration of more than one year.</p> <p>Additionally, the school advisory council determines jointly with the school's staff the use of the money awarded to the school through the School Recognition Program. However, if the school staff and the school advisory council cannot reach agreement by November 1, the awards must be equally distributed to all <i>classroom teachers currently teaching in the school</i>. (Refer to the School Recognition Program Fact Sheet.)</p>

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7. How much money is appropriated?	The earmarked amount in the General Appropriations Act each year from 1997 through 2004 for discretionary use by SACs was \$10 per unweighted FTE student.
8. Are SAC meetings subject to the Sunshine Law?	Yes. SAC meetings are public meetings and subject to the Sunshine Law. The SAC members are free to talk to other parents, community members, and citizens to gather information regarding upcoming decisions. They are not authorized to talk to one another about the actions to be taken at the meeting. The members may discuss matters for which no action by the council is required. There may be instances when discussions involving school personnel and parents who also serve on the school advisory council include matters which may be under consideration by the council in a broader context. The discussion of these matters when performing their day-to-day responsibilities as school personnel or as parents rather than as members of the school advisory council would not necessarily be subject to the Government in the Sunshine Law.
9. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 24.121, F.S. -- Lottery money. Section 286.011(1), F.S. -- Sunshine Law. Section 1001.42(16), F.S. -- School improvement plans. Section 1001.452, F.S. -- District and School Advisory Councils. Section 1008.36, F.S. -- School Recognition Program.</p> <p>2004-2005 General Appropriations Act, Specific Appropriation 7</p> <p>Attorney General's Informal Opinion letter, March 14, 1994.</p>
10. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education Bureau of School Improvement (850) 245-0426 www.osi.fsu.edu</p> <p>Department of Education Publications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Technical Assistance Document for Evaluating Your School Improvement Process</i> <p>Department of Education General Counsel Opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 98-04 Composition of school board advisory councils • 94-022 Role of school advisory councils in preparation of SIP • 94-019 SAC role in preparation of the SIP

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Education Council

Deregulation of Public Schools

Fact Sheet

January 2005

1. What is public school deregulation?	<p>The Legislature created the school deregulation pilot program in 1998 in order to give public schools the same flexibility and accountability as charter schools. The purposes of the pilot program are to improve student learning; increase learning opportunities for students, with special emphasis on expanded learning experiences for low-achieving students; to encourage the use of different and innovative learning methods; to increase choice of learning opportunities for students; to establish a new form of accountability for public schools; to require the measurement of learning outcomes and creative innovative measurement tools; to make the school to unit for improvement; and to relieve the schools of paperwork and procedures required by the state and the school district other than health, safety, equal opportunity, fiscal accountability and documentation of student achievement.</p>
2. How are schools selected?	<p>A proposal to be a deregulated school is developed by the school principal and the school advisory council. A majority of the members of the school advisory council must approve the proposal. Additionally, at least 50% of the teachers employed at the school must approve the proposal and the school must conduct a survey to show parental support. The district school board then receives and either approves or rejects the proposal by majority vote.</p> <p>The following districts are authorized to conduct pilot programs through the 2003-2004 school year: Palm Beach, Pinellas, Seminole, Leon, Walton, Citrus, and Lee Counties. Citrus County has 10 schools in the program; Leon County has 5 schools; Palm Beach County has 5 schools, Pinellas County has 1 school; Seminole County has 6 schools; and Walton County has 3 schools.</p> <p>The A+ Plan, which passed in 1999, allows schools that receive a grade of "A" and schools that show improvement of at least two performance grade categories to become deregulated if they so choose. The DOE reports that no school has been deregulated via this pathway. (Refer to the <u>School Grading System Fact Sheet</u>.)</p>
3. Will deregulated schools remain public schools?	<p>Deregulated schools remain public schools for all purposes and must continue to be nonsectarian in programs, admission</p>

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	<p>policies, and employment practices. No tuition may be charged and schools remain subject to annual financial audits as do all other public schools.</p>
4. Will deregulation affect school funding?	<p>No. Under the current law, deregulated public schools must be funded in the same manner as other public schools in the school district. Deregulated public schools must still provide instruction for at least the minimum number of days required by law.</p>
5. Are deregulated schools exempt from the school safety statutes?	<p>Deregulated public schools are not exempted from sections of the Florida School Code that pertain to student health, safety and welfare. Deregulated public schools must only employ or contract with staff who has been fingerprinted as required by law. Facilities used by deregulated public schools must comply with the State Uniform Building Code for Public Education Facilities and adhere to fire protection codes pursuant to law.</p>
6. What are the applicable statutes and rules?	<p>Section 1003.63, F.S. -- Deregulated Public Schools. Section 1008.345(7), F.S. -- Deregulated status for "A" schools, schools making excellence progress, and schools that have improved at least two program categories.</p>
7. Where can I get additional information?	<p>Florida Department of Education K-12 Office of the Chancellor (850) 245-0509</p> <p>Florida State University College of Education Center for the Study of Teaching and Learning "Preliminary Report of the Evaluation of the Deregulated School Pilot Project" November 1998</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>



1. What is the No Child Left Behind Act?	<p>The <i>No Child Left Behind Act</i> (NCLB) is a 2002 federal law which redefines the K-12 structure of education, with its goal to close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. The NCLB embodies four principles for education reform:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• stronger accountability for results,• expanded flexibility and local control,• expanded options for parents, and• emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.
2. How does the NCLB increase accountability and how has Florida implemented this principle?	<p>The NCLB strengthens accountability by requiring states to implement statewide accountability systems covering all public schools and students. These systems must be based on challenging state standards in reading and mathematics, annual testing for all students in grades 3-8, and annual statewide progress objectives ensuring that <i>all groups</i> of students reach proficiency within 12 years. Assessment results and state progress objectives must be broken out by poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency to ensure that no group is left behind. Schools must meet annual targets for the % of students who perform at or above the proficient level on state tests in reading and math in order to make "<i>adequate yearly progress</i>" (AYP). School districts and schools that fail to make adequate yearly progress (AYP) toward statewide proficiency goals will, over time, be subject to improvement, corrective action, and restructuring measures aimed at getting them back on course to meet state standards (See Question 4). Schools that meet or exceed AYP objectives or close achievement gaps will be eligible for State Academic Achievement Awards.</p> <p>Florida has already developed state standards, called the Sunshine State Standards, to give parents, students, teachers, and school administrators a clear understanding of what skills and competencies Florida students should have in seven subject areas at certain stages of their school career. Since 1994, Florida has created standards in reading, math, and science as well as social studies, the arts, health and physical education, and foreign languages. (Refer to the <u>Sunshine State Standards Fact Sheet</u>.)</p>

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<p>3. How does the NCLB expand flexibility and local control?</p>	<p>The NCLB gives states and school districts flexibility in the use of federal education funds in exchange for strong accountability for results. New flexibility provisions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • authority for states and local educational agencies (LEA) to transfer up to 50% of the funding they receive under four major state grant programs to any one of the programs, or to Title I. Covered programs include Teacher Quality State Grants, Educational Technology, Innovative Programs, and Safe and Drug-Free Schools. • competitive State Flexibility Demonstration Program that permits up to 7 states to consolidate the state share of nearly all federal state grant programs while providing additional flexibility in their use of Title V Innovation funds.
<p>4. How does the NCLB expand options for parents and students?</p>	<p>The NCLB increases the choices available to the parents of students attending Title I schools that fail to meet state standards. Parents of students in schools that have been identified for school improvement (a school that fails for two years to meet achievement goals), have the option of transferring their children to another public school in their district. The district is required to pay for transportation.</p> <p>Students attending a school that fails to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for three years will be eligible for supplemental services, such as tutoring, after-school help, or summer classes, from an approved provider of their choice.</p> <p>Schools that continue to fail (those that have failed to meet State standards for at least 3 of the 4 preceding years) will receive technical help and must create a plan for improvement.</p> <p>Schools that continue to fail to make AYP for 5 years, even after receiving assistance, may be closed and "reconstituted" with new staff or will reopen as a charter school.</p> <p>States must allow students who attend a persistently dangerous school, or who are victims of violent crime at school, to transfer to a safe school. States also must report school safety statistics to the public on a school-by-school basis.</p>
<p>5. How does the NCLB promote the reading teaching methods that</p>	<p>The NCLB has developed a new comprehensive effort called <i>Reading First</i>. This \$900 million state grant program promotes the use of scientifically based research to provide high-quality reading instruction for grades kindergarten</p>

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are proven to work?	through grade three to ensure that all children read well by the end of grade three. State education agencies are eligible to submit applications to receive a <i>Reading First</i> grant.
6. How has Florida implemented a similar reading program?	<p>In an effort to ensure that Florida's school children are able to read on grade level, the Florida Legislature has taken steps to end social promotion of students who are not able to read. Students who demonstrate a reading deficiency in grades kindergarten through grade three will be given extensive remedial instruction. If, at the end of grade three, the student's reading deficiency has not been remedied, the student will be retained. (Refer to the Reading Instruction Fact Sheet.)</p> <p><i>Just Read, Florida!</i> is a comprehensive coordinated reading initiative implemented in 2001 by executive order of Governor Jeb Bush aimed at helping every student become a successful, independent reader. Scientifically based reading research provides the foundation. (Refer to the Reading Instruction Fact Sheet.)</p>
7. How does the NCLB strengthen teacher quality?	<p>The NCLB authorizes \$3.2 billion in federal funds to improve teacher quality throughout the country. All states must put a "highly-qualified teacher" in every public school classroom by 2005 (See Question 8). The NCLB also makes it easier for local schools to recruit and retain excellent teachers. The NCLB gives states the flexibility to develop innovative programs for improving teacher quality including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative ways of becoming a teacher, so experienced professionals can become teachers faster; • Merit pay authorization enabling states and districts to reward good teachers and encourage them to stay in the profession; • Authorization to states and districts to give bonuses to teachers in high-need subjects, such as math and science; • A boost in the "Troops to Teachers" program to encourage women and men in the military, many of whom have much needed math and science experience, to become teachers; and • An increase in the "Transition to Teaching" program, which is a program to recruit high-quality professionals to become teachers.
8. What is a highly-qualified teacher?	<p>Requirements to be considered a "highly-qualified teacher" under NCLB are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers must be fully licensed or certified by the respective state. • <u>New elementary</u> teachers must have a bachelor's degree

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	<p>and pass a state test demonstrating subject knowledge and teaching skills in reading, writing, math and other areas of basic elementary school curriculum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>New middle or secondary</u> school teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree and demonstrate competency in each academic subject taught, or complete an academic major, a graduate degree or advanced certification. • <u>Existing teachers</u> must have at least a bachelor's degree and meet the requirements above, or demonstrate competency in all subjects taught. A state evaluation standard is to be used to judge competency. The evaluation standard must provide objective information about the teacher's knowledge in the subject taught and can consider, but not use as a primary criterion, time spent teaching the subject. <p>(Refer to the Teacher Certification Fact Sheet.)</p>
9. How does the NCLB promote English proficiency?	<p>The NCLB simplifies federal support for English language instruction by combining categorical bilingual and immigrant education grants that benefited a small percentage of limited English proficient (LEP) students in relatively few schools into a state formula program. The new formula program will facilitate the comprehensive planning by states and school districts needed to ensure implementation of programs that benefit all LEP students by helping them learn English and meet the same high academic standards as other students.</p> <p>(Refer to the English for Speakers of Other Languages [ESOL] Fact Sheet.)</p>
10. How do Florida's A+ Plan and the NCLB compare?	<p>While Florida's A+ Plan and the NCLB share the same goal of high achievement for all students, the rules by which the two laws measure progress toward the goal differ somewhat. The A+ Plan evaluates schools by taking a moving picture of student achievement, using a combination of current student performance along with the amount of improvement in learning from one year to another. The NCLB uses a one-time snapshot of student achievement, which produces a different, and, in some ways, less complete picture of school performance. In addition to its reliance on one-time testing snapshots, the NCLB rates schools based on nine different student subgroups and a minimum of 45 separate requirements, with a low score in any one of these areas leading to a school rating of "no adequate yearly progress (AYP)."</p> <p>NCLB points out specific sub-groups that need improvement. In addition to reporting aggregate data for all students,</p>

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	<p>NCLB requires achievement data that must be reported separately for economically disadvantaged students, limited English proficient students, students with disabilities, and each major racial and ethnic group (Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, and American Indian). The NCLB requires schools to ensure that 95% of the student body and each subgroup take the state tests. Florida's A+ Plan gauges the overall quality of a school's effort in improving student achievement. These basic differences may result in a number of the A, B, or C-graded schools under the A+ Plan, being labeled as "in need of improvement" under the NCLB. Schools and the public should interpret the new "in need of improvement" label not so much as a failure on the part of any of the state's schools, as much as an additional piece of information representing a considerably different perspective on how to use FCAT scores to judge schools. The NCLB introduces new ratings and labels that can be used to complement, supplement, and enhance the more established and comprehensive A+ Plan.</p>
11. What are the applicable rules and statutes?	<p>PL 107-110, <i>The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001</i></p> <p>Section 1008.22, F.S. -- Student assessment program for public schools.</p> <p>Section 1008.345, F.S. -- Implementation of state system of school improvement and educational accountability.</p>
12. Where can I find additional information?	<p><i>No Child Left Behind</i> U.S. Department of Education 400 Maryland Ave., SW Washington, D.C. 20202 (800) USA-LEARN http://www.nochildleftbehind.gov/</p> <p>Florida Department of Education No Child Left Behind (850) 488-1785</p> <p>Florida House of Representatives Education Council (850) 488-7451</p>

